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WHA Press Guidance  
April 14, 2002

**VENEZUELA: POLITICAL CRISIS**

**Question:** What is the U.S. reaction to the current situation in Venezuela?

**Answer:**

**WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE SITUATION IN VENEZUELA  
AND ARE WATCHING CAREFULLY AS EVENTS UNFOLD. WE  
CONTINUE TO CALL ON ALL ELEMENTS TO AVOID VIOLENCE  
AND SEEK WAYS TO ENGAGE PEACEFULLY TO RESOLVE  
THIS CRISIS.**

**THOSE IN AUTHORITY BEAR PARTICULAR RESPONSIBILITY  
TO MAINTAIN ORDER AND THE CONDITIONS NECESSARY  
FOR VENEZUELAN TO WORK TOGETHER TO RESTORE  
FULLY THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF DEMOCRACY.**

**AS WE HAVE DONE FOR THE PAST SEVERAL DAYS, WE  
CONTINUE TO WORK WITH OUR HEMISPHERIC PARTNERS**

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**IN THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES TO ASSIST  
VENEZUELA CONFRONT THE CURRENT CRISIS.**

**AFTER DAY-LONG CONSULTATIONS, AND WORKING WITHIN  
THE FRAMEWORK OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEMOCRATIC  
CHARTER, THE OAS ADOPTED A RESOLUTION ON APRIL 14  
CONDEMNING THE ALTERATION OF CONSTITUTIONAL  
ORDER AND DEPLORABLE ACTS OF VIOLENCE IN  
VENEZUELA. THE RESOLUTION ALSO CALLED FOR  
NORMALIZATION OF DEMOCRATIC RULE AND ASKED THE  
OAS SECRETARY GENERAL TO TRAVEL TO CARACAS AS  
SOON AS POSSIBLE. A SPECIAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE  
OAS HAS BEEN CONVOKED FOR APRIL 18.**

**THE UNITED STATES FULLY SUPPORTS THIS RESOLUTION.**

~~Carol Fuller~~  
Carol Fuller

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(If asked only)

**Question: What was the cause of the current crisis in Venezuela?**

**Answer:**

**UNDEMOCRATIC ACTIONS COMMITTED OR ENCOURAGED  
BY THE CHAVEZ ADMINISTRATION PROVOKED THIS CRISIS.**

**INCUMBENT NOW UPON CHAVEZ TO NOT JUST REESTABLISH  
HIS POWER, BUT TO ENSURE THE LEGITIMACY OF HIS  
GOVERNMENT BY WORKING WITH THE POLITICAL  
OPPOSITION AND WITH ALL DEMOCRATIC FORCES IN  
VENEZUELA.**

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**Question: Is the U.S. concerned about its oil supply from Venezuela?**

**Answer:**

**VENEZUELA HAS ALWAYS BEEN A RELIABLE ENERGY  
SUPPLIER, AND WE EXPECT THAT WILL CONTINUE.**

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**Question: What is the status of U.S. citizens in Venezuela?**

**Answer:**

- **WE HAVE NO REPORTS OF INJURIES TO ANY AMERICAN CITIZENS IN VENEZUELA. AMERICAN CITIZENS LIVING IN VENEZUELA HAVE BEEN ADVISED BY THE EMBASSY TO REMAIN IN THEIR HOMES UNTIL THE SITUATION STABILIZES.**
- **THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAS ISSUED A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT, ADVISING AMERICAN CITIZENS TO DEFER TRAVEL TO VENEZUELA.**

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